Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

In the Claims:

Please enter the following amended claims in the application. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-13 (Canceled)

Claim 14 (Canceled)

Claim 15 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[14]] 18, wherein each AlkO represents a CH_2CH_2O, R^2 represents a methyl group, and n is a number of from 5 to 15.

Claim 16 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[14]] 18, wherein the alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester is prepared by reacting a carboxylic acid ester and an alkylene oxide in the presence of calcined hydrotalcite.

Claim 17 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[14]] 18, wherein the alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester is present in the rinse agent in an amount of from 0.5 to 40% by weight.

Claim 18 (Currently amended): A method of rinsing machine-washed tableware materials, said method comprising:

(a) providing an anionic surfactant-free a rinse agent comprising (i) an alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester with a narrow homolog distribution of the general a formula (I):

$$R^1-\overset{\overset{\displaystyle O}{\|}}{C}-(OAlk)_nOR^2 \qquad (I)$$

2
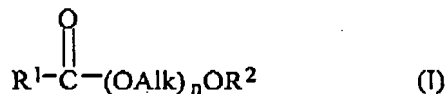
Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

wherein $R^1C(O)$ represents an aliphatic acyl group, each AlkO independently represents an alkoxylate selected from the group consisting of CH_2CH_2O, $CHCH_3CH_2O$ and CH_2CHCH_3O, n is a number of from 1 to 20, and R^2 represents an aliphatic alkyl group and (ii) an <u>additional nonionic surfactant selected</u> from the group consisting of fatty alcohol polyglycol ethers, alk(en)yl oligoglycosides, fatty acid-N-alkyl glucamides, hydroxy mixed ethers, mixed ethers, and mixtures thereof; and

(b) contacting a tableware material surface with the rinse agent during machine washing of the tableware material surface.

Claim 19 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 18, wherein the additional nonionic surfactant comprises an alk(en)yl oligoglycoside of ~~the general~~ a formula ~~(II)~~:

$$R^3O\text{-}[G]_p \qquad (II)$$

wherein R^3 represents an alkyl or alkenyl group having from 4 to 22 carbon atoms, each G independently represents a sugar unit containing 5 or 6 carbon atoms and p represents a number of from 1 to 10.

Claim 20 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 18, wherein the additional nonionic surfactant comprises a fatty acid-N-alkyl polyhydroxy alkylamide of ~~the general~~ a formula ~~(III)~~:

$$\begin{array}{c} R^4 \\ | \\ R^5CO\text{-}N\text{-}[Z] \end{array} \qquad (III)$$
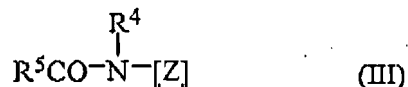
wherein R^5CO represents an aliphatic acyl group having from 6 to 22 carbon atoms, R^4 represents an alkyl or hydroxyalkyl group having from 1 to 4 carbon atoms, and [Z] represents a linear or branched polyhydroxyalkyl group having from 3 to 12 carbon atoms and from 3 to 10 hydroxyl groups.
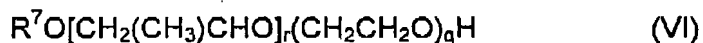
3

Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

Claim 21 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 18, wherein the additional nonionic surfactant comprises a fatty alcohol poly(alkylene)glycol ether of ~~the general~~ a formula ~~(V)~~:

$$R^6O(CH_2CH_2O)_p[MO]_mH \qquad (V)$$

wherein R^6 represents an alk(en)yl group having from 8 to 22 carbon atoms, each MO independently represents an alkoxide selected from the group consisting of propylene oxide and butylene oxide, p is a number of from 1 to 15 and m is a number of from 0 to 10.

Claim 22 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 18, wherein the additional nonionic surfactant comprises a fatty alcohol polyalkylene glycol ether of ~~the general~~ a formula ~~(VI)~~:

$$R^7O[CH_2(CH_3)CHO]_r(CH_2CH_2O)_qH \qquad (VI)$$

wherein R^7 represents an alk(en)yl group having from 8 to 22 carbon atoms, r is a number of from 1 to 10 and q is a number of from 0 to 15.

Claim 23 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 18, wherein the additional nonionic surfactant comprises a hydroxy mixed ether of ~~the general~~ a formula ~~(VII)~~:

$$R^8O[CH_2CH(CH_3)O]_x(CH_2CHR^9O)_y[CH_2CH(OH)R^{10}]_z \qquad (VII)$$
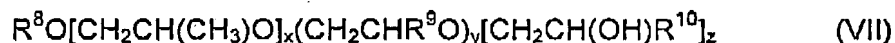
wherein R^8 represents an alk(en)yl group having from 4 to 18 carbon atoms, each R^9 independently represents a hydrogen or a methyl or ethyl group, each R^{10} independently represents an alkyl group having from 2 to 22 carbon atoms, x is a number of from 0 to 10, y is a number of from 1 to 30 and z is the number 1.

4

Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

Claim 24 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 18, wherein the alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester and the additional nonionic surfactant are present in the rinse agent in a ratio by weight of from 10:90 to 80:20.

Claim 25 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[14]] 18, wherein the rinse agent further comprises an acid selected from the group consisting of monocarboxylic acids, polycarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 26 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 25, wherein the acid is present in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight.

Claim 27 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[17]] 19, wherein the rinse agent further comprises an acid selected from the group consisting of monocarboxylic acids, polycarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 28 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 27, wherein the acid is present in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight.

Claim 29 (Currently amended): The method according to claim [[19]] 20, wherein the rinse agent further comprises an acid selected from the group consisting of monocarboxylic acids, polycarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 30 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 29, wherein the acid is present in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight.
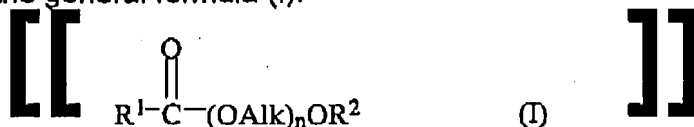
Claim 31 (Currently amended): The method according to claim 21, whereon, the rinse agent further comprises an acid selected from the group consisting of monocarboxylic acids, polycarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof An anionic

5

Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

~~surfactant free rinsing agent comprising:~~

~~(a) an alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester with a narrow homolog~~
~~distribution of the general formula (I):~~

$$\Big[\Big[\quad R^1\!\!-\!\!\overset{\displaystyle O}{\overset{\|}{C}}\!\!-\!\!(OAlk)_nOR^2 \qquad (I) \quad \Big]\Big]$$

~~herein $R^1C(O)$ represents an aliphatic acyl group, each AlkO independently represents~~
~~an alkoxylate selected from the group consisting of CH_2CH_2O, $CHCH_3CH_2O$ and~~
~~CH_2CHCH_3O, n is a number of from 1 to 20, and R^2 represents an aliphatic alkyl group;~~
~~and~~

~~(b) an acid selected from the group consisting of monocarboxylic~~
~~acids, polycarboxylic acids, and mixtures thereof.~~

Claim 32 (Canceled)

Claim 33 (Currently amended): The ~~rinsing agent~~ method according to claim [[31]] 18, wherein the rinse agent further ~~comprising~~ comprises a solubilizer.

Claim 34 (Currently amended): The ~~rinsing agent~~ method according to claim [[31]] 24, wherein the alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester is present in the rinse agent in an amount of from 0.5 to 40% by weight.

Claim 35 (Currently amended): The ~~rinsing agent~~ method according to claim [[31]] 34, wherein the acid is present in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight.

Claim 36 (Currently amended): The ~~rinsing agent~~ method according to claim [[32]] 31, wherein, the rinse agent further ~~comprising~~ comprises a solubilizer, and wherein the alkoxylated carboxylic acid ester is present in the rinse agent in an amount

6

Serial No. 09/831,432
Art Unit: 1751

of from 0.5 to 40% by weight, and wherein the acid is present in an amount of from 1 to 50% by weight.

7